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ABSTRACT

This document contains a workbook to help young people between the ages of 11 and 15 handle the stress in their lives or the stress of their friends. Throughout the workbook, there are cues to users when it is time for them to stop and record their feelings. The workbook discusses symptoms of stress, situations that cause stress, reactions to stress, and how to get help during stressful times. (NB)

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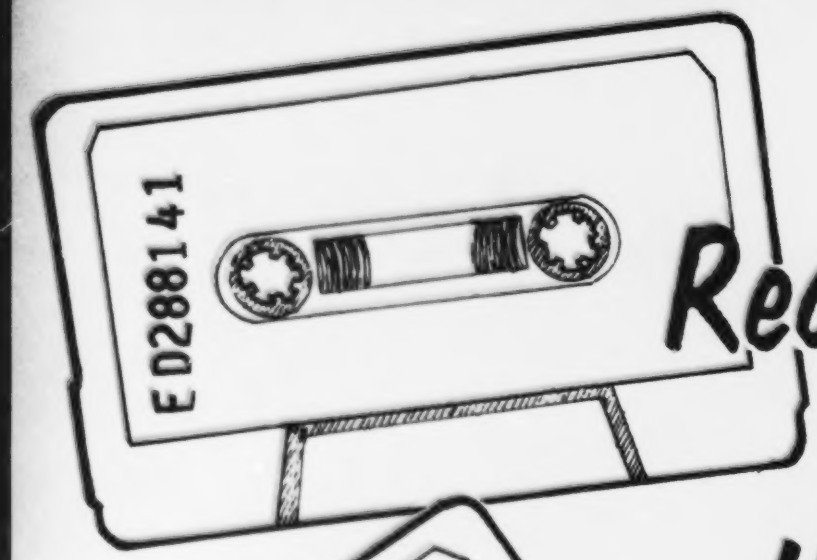

Recording the Hard Times

A Workbook

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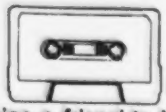
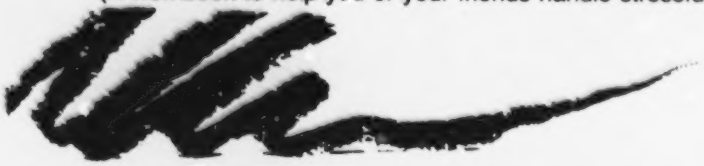
Everyone experiences stress. In fact, anytime we feel out of control, we are stressed. This workbook can help you regain control.

When you see this symbol  it is a chance for you to record your feelings. Or, if you are helping a friend to handle a crisis, these sections will give you ideas for questions to ask or activities for your friend.

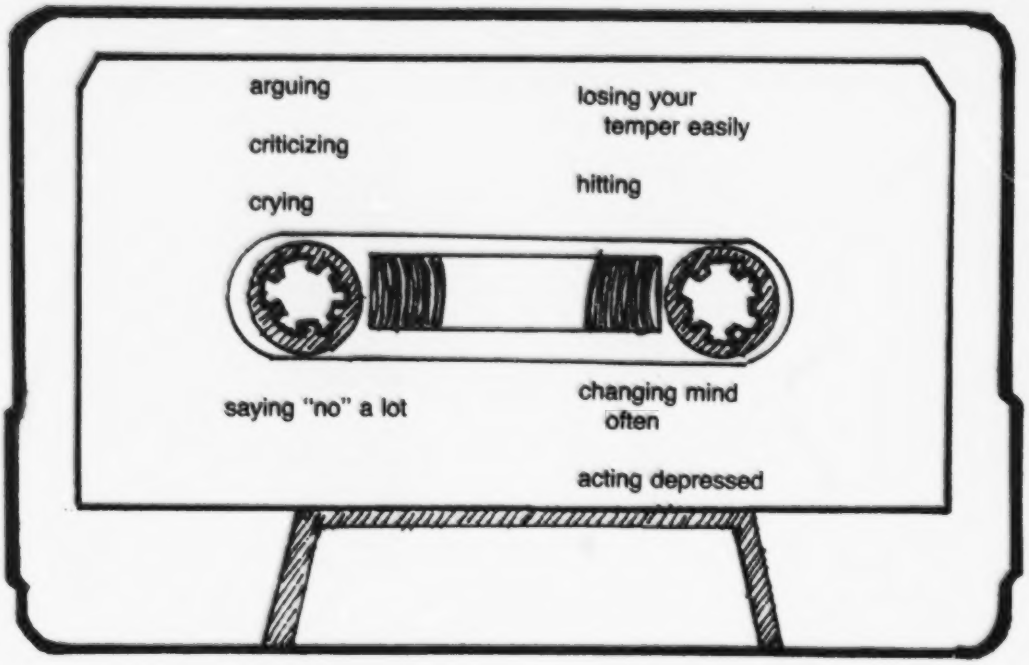
Remember, these ideas can be used for many stressful situations.

Recording the Hard Times

(A workbook to help you or your friends handle stressful times)



Just as a tape jams or breaks, or batteries get weak, or electricity goes off, people too have problems or breakdowns. These happen more often when something isn't going right for someone. And often one person's problems affect other people. Here's one way this could happen: Your mom won't let you buy a new pair of jeans. This makes you angry, so you yell at everyone in the house that evening. Your yelling upsets your dad, so he grounds you. Your mom feels bad because the reason she wouldn't let you buy the jeans is because the family is short of money. Now mom, dad, you and everyone else in the house is "experiencing a technical breakdown." Sound familiar? Yelling is just one symptom of stress. Here are several others that are common:



Time to Record

You may think of other symptoms. When serious problems occur, some people may even abuse others and themselves.

Does it seem like some of these things are going on in your life? ____Yes ____No
What are some of the things you have noticed?

Time to Record

What causes people to act this way? These might be some of the reasons:

- losing a job
- parents' divorce
- family moving away
- sickness
- death of someone close
- less money
- losing a friend
- bad grades
- disappointment

If you're having problems, what might be some of the reasons?

No two people are alike, so everyone doesn't feel the same way when things go wrong. The list below describes some feelings you might have when things aren't just right. Check the ones you feel often:

- appetite change
- headaches
- tension

- spaced out
- worried

- resentful
- lonely
- lashing out
- clamming up
- fewer contacts with friends

- muscle aches
- pounding heart

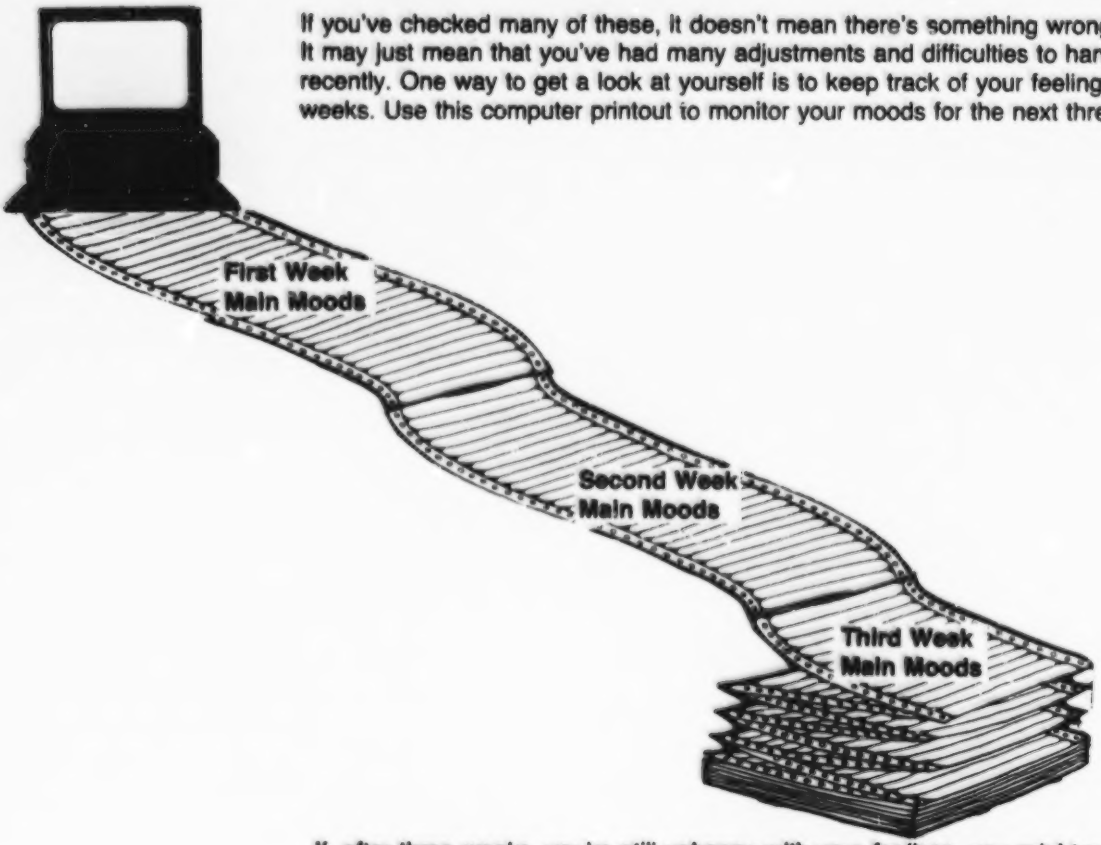
Time to Record

- tired
- can't sleep
- weight change
- colds

- easily discouraged
- forgetful
- poor concentration
- confused
- bored

- "blue"
- bad temper
- nightmares
- crying spells
- irritable
- "no one cares"

If you've checked many of these, it doesn't mean there's something wrong with you. It may just mean that you've had many adjustments and difficulties to handle recently. One way to get a look at yourself is to keep track of your feelings for a few weeks. Use this computer printout to monitor your moods for the next three weeks:



If, after three weeks, you're still unhappy with your feelings, you might want to do something about them.

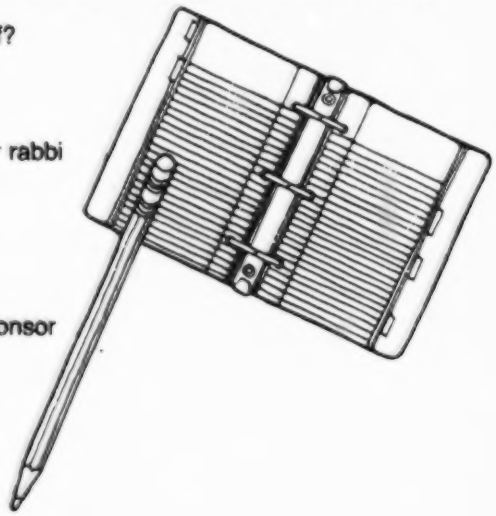
Time to Record

Recording your thoughts sometimes makes you feel better. It's really talking to yourself. It can also be a way to play back earlier days to get a longtime look at what's happening. You can write, draw or use a tape recorder. This is very personal and doesn't have to be shared with anyone else. It might include what's happening, how you feel, what you wish would happen and anything else you want to record.

Want to talk to someone besides yourself?

Try:

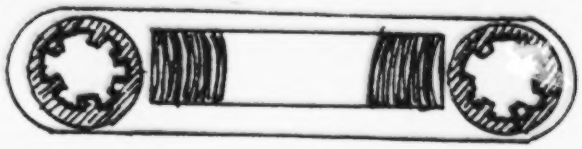
good friend	minister, priest or rabbi
teacher	neighbor
counselor	4-H agent
your parents	club leader or sponsor
coach	
friend's parents	



If you've read this far, it's probably safe to assume something is bothering you or you'd like to help a friend with a problem. If so, this next section is for you.

When things aren't going right, people often feel there's nothing they can do about it. But there are ways to get back on track.

These suggestions will work better if you're in a good mood. Instead of replaying the same mood over and over, a healthier way is to fast-forward to a new mood. These tips won't erase the old tape, but they can get you ready to attack the problem:



Do something you like.

Get some exercise.

Listen to music and relax.

Give yourself a chance to think.

Talk to someone you trust.

Now, let's start recording a new **YOU.**

Focus on something good.

Don't be a broken record:

When you find yourself doing this, think of all the tests you've passed!

When problems affect the whole family, **try to be part of the solution.** Thinking only of yourself can make things worse. Everyone can help make things better.

Turn your I CAN'TS into I CAN'S.

For example, if there isn't enough money for redoing your room, be creative. See what you can do with a little money and a **LOT** of imagination.

Learn to listen and talk

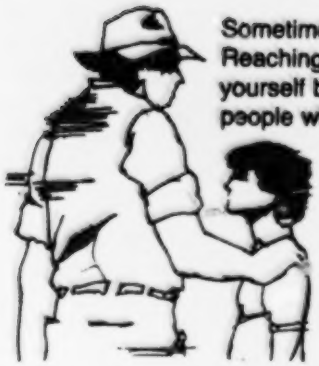
as a family. It's always important to do this, but especially when things are tough. Sometimes this is hard even for parents, so you may want to ask them to have a talk with you. Remember it's important to listen, too.

If you're trying to help a friend, listening is the most important thing you can do.

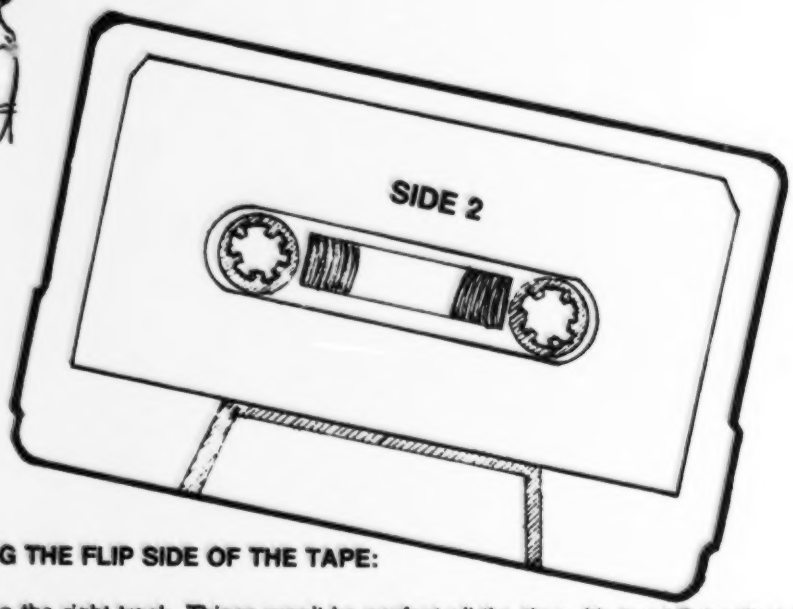
One important reason to talk is to understand what's happening so you'll know what to expect. This is especially true if it's a long-term family problem. Sometimes it's easier to deal with a problem when everyone knows what to expect.

Since the farm didn't do well this year, I know I won't be able to get many new clothes. But could I pick one new outfit?

REPLAY



Sometimes you can't handle it all by yourself. It's OK to borrow someone else's tape. Reaching out for help is not a sign of weakness; it means you know you can't do it yourself but you want to get on the right track. See page 5 for some suggestions of people who might be able to help.



PLAYING THE FLIP SIDE OF THE TAPE:

You're on the right track. Things won't be perfect all the time, it's true! But adjust the volume or make a tuning adjustment, and you should find that the new you is the real you. You might not be able to change tough times, but you can change the way you deal with them.

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